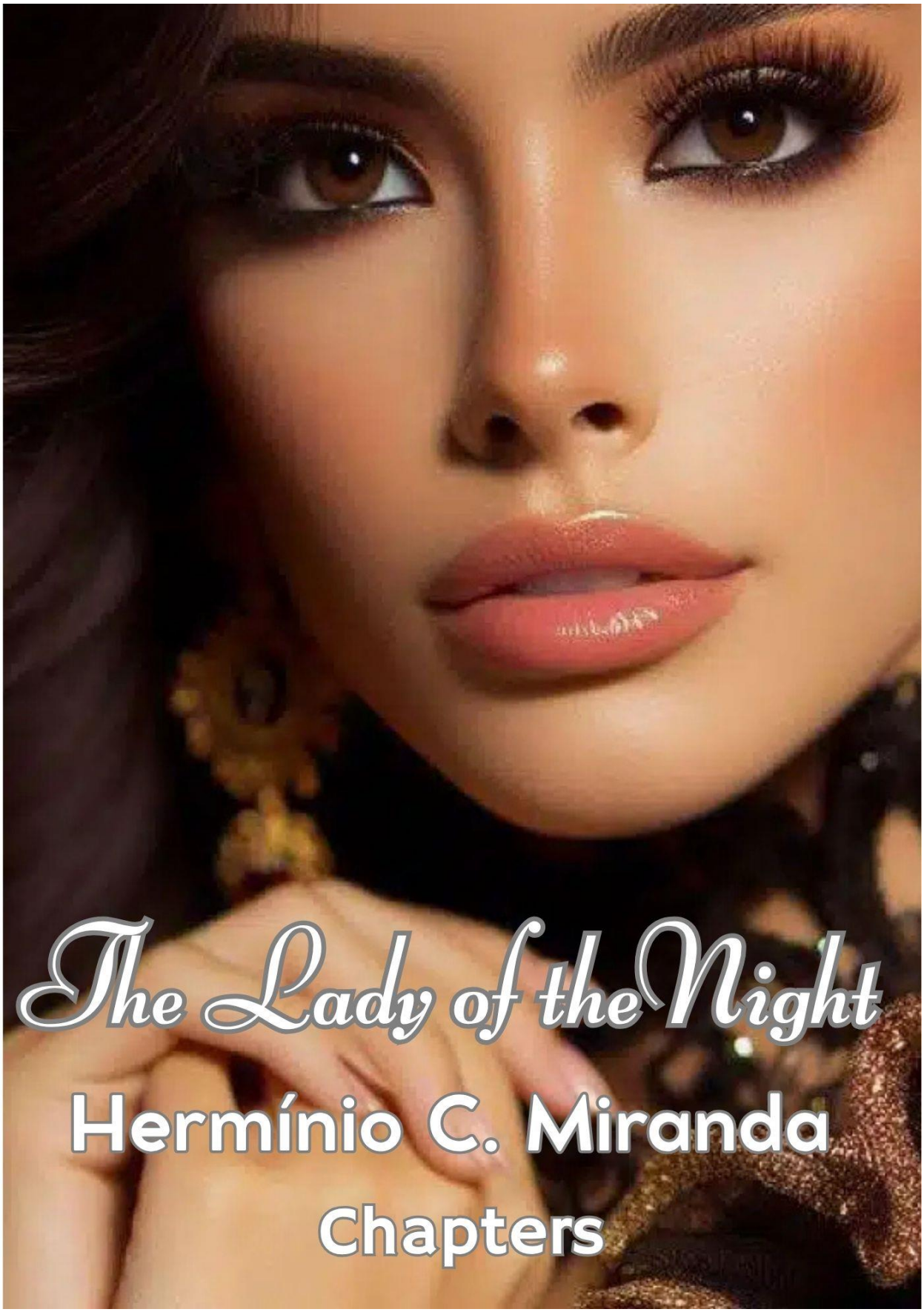
The Lady of the Night
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Chapters

THE LADY OF THE NIGHT

The seemingly simple topic of obsession appears inexhaustible in its complexities and implications. In fact, in its basic structures, obsession is merely a process of retribution—someone who has committed a more or less serious error to the detriment of others and someone who takes revenge.

The sinner is a slave to sin, says good ethical doctrine. **"You will not get out of there until you have paid the last penny,"** said the One who has the greatest authority among us. Therefore, He recommended: **"Go and sin no more."**

We know today from the Doctrine of the Spirits that we are the very builders of hell, that is, of the intimate condition of disharmony, and that it is up to us to undo it in order to free ourselves from it. It is as if it were a portable prison, like the heavy shell of the crawling snail that we drag with us everywhere.

This is the basic scheme; this is the theory and practice of the process, but in the deceptive simplicity of this mechanism, there is a universe of subtleties, complications, deviations, and true madness.

Around it, the spirits tormented by hatred, fascinated by the desperate yearning for revenge never satisfied, because it is insatiable, cling, blindly, to their victims, without realizing that they are also victims and, above all, also guilty, and therefore in need of forgiving in order to be forgiven, just as Christ immortalized in the text of the Lord's Prayer, the Our Father.

As mentioned elsewhere, we have not had many cases of typical obsession in our group. We prefer to leave the choice regarding the nature of our work to our spiritual guides. However, we have never failed to respond with our prayers to the requests of acquaintances and friends on behalf of victims of obsession, whose names we promptly inscribe in our Prayer Book.

Such cases, according to what our elder friends assured us, were always attended to as far as possible, and we were occasionally brought to converse with discordant spirits engaged in challenging obsessive processes.

As is our custom, we never inquired which criteria prevailed in these

situations and why certain companions were brought and others were not.

We limited ourselves, as always, to attending to the cases placed before us. That was the case on that December night, close to Christmas. The previous week, we had attended to a spirit connected to the same case—a young lady who had asked us for the help of our prayers. Her case was quite difficult and had dragged on for many years of torment, imposing afflictions on the whole family.

An unbreakable iron circle tightened around the young woman; she was not far from insanity, and had already been on the verge of suicide several times. Threatening voices tormented her day and night, and both her domestic life and her professional activity were in true turmoil, for there were inhibitions and fears everywhere.

Of course, practically everything had been tried, including, naturally, the medical treatment that burdened her with potent drugs, but of limited positive effect in her case. Spiritism had also been called upon to help, as well as Umbanda. The distressed family sought all valid resources, at least to keep the flame of hope alive.

Although indifferent to the spiritual problems, the husband did not oppose this movement, perhaps thinking that any method that resolved or lessened the family's anguish would be welcome. Furthermore, the lady had a Spiritist training and therefore some knowledge about it.

She was not unaware of her situation and her problems; she sought to pray and submit to the recommendations of practitioners of Spiritism or guiding spirits. More than once, her persecutors had been taken to so-called disobsession mediumistic groups for treatment. The results were discouraging.

The spirit that visited us that night was that of a woman. It was not difficult to perceive that she was extremely experienced, a true master in the tragic art of tormenting.

She was perfectly aware of what she was doing and why she was doing it. She knew very well, from personal experience, what we might call the technology of obsession, using, with confidence, the instruments and resources at her disposal.

When drawn to a unique mediumistic group, she skillfully mystified or else argued with her usual argumentation, her right to take revenge. In fact, her performance in the session began with an attempt at mystification.

As soon as she was incorporated into the medium, she began to moan and whimper as if she were suffering terrible pain. With feigned difficulty, she articulated the first sentence:
-I... I don't want to leave there... I don't want to... I don't want to..."

And she cried more and more. We weren't impressed by the scene before we knew what it was about, and when we asked her, she explained that she was resting there. She later confessed that she didn't like anyone and that no one liked her. She was used to being there (wherever it was, since she hadn't explained yet) and tired of life's struggles, but that was very vague and somewhat suspicious. What could be behind all this?

In an effort to understand her position and condition, to help her, we began to formulate some questions, which she skillfully evaded.

Suddenly, she let slip a more revealing observation:

-I'm tired of people coming up to me and saying, "You need light! You need light!" Light...! Maybe the person talking to me needs much more light than I do... "You need light, sister!" Nonsense... I at least know who I am.

She had tried, therefore, with the initial crying and moaning, to induce us to the standard treatment for these cases in more hurried groups: to say a prayer, a quick indoctrination, perhaps give her a spiritual healing session, and dismiss her summarily, which was what she really wanted. Instead, we delved deeper into her problem.

Obviously, she was not resting at all, but we needed calm, otherwise we would not be able to help her.

The next role she played was to pretend to be crazy. She sighed and began to hum a little children's song that seemed to be of her own invention, about the theme of a difficult life. She stopped soon, however, because she

realized that the new artifice hadn't impressed us much either. She suddenly changed her tone and said firmly:
-Nonsense! I don't want to talk to you.

From there to irritation was a short step. She demanded that we stop asking questions, because we had nothing to do with her life. We were, therefore, beginning to tread the right path, towards the core of her problems. The reaction and aggressiveness were in a crescendo, in an attitude of defiant irony.
-Well, my daughter, you've played your part. Can we talk now?

And she, with a measured and firm voice:
- Do you know what anger is? Do you really know? Not the kind of anger dogs have. Anger towards people. Anger. Do you know what hate is? Real, red hate... What else? Anger, hate, resentment... What else do you have there? Revenge...

She had therefore revealed her intentions and motivations, but it was still too early to know the causes that moved her, and the dialogue promised to be long and difficult, as it indeed was.

It is not necessary to reproduce it here in all its details, because, in the phenomenon of obsession, its structures are always the same.

-You know what it is? People are like that... When it's someone else's turn to get hurt, they tear him down! When it's someone else's turn to be trampled on, they put him down!

When the other person complains... Oh! Poor thing! Don't do that! It's a poor, unfortunate soul you're bothering...

Yes, that's the thing... You have to feel it here, look, right here in your flesh. So, you can go, and say: "Poor thing!" Because you'll feel the pain I felt, you'll feel it ***properly***. And you'll feel it slowly, little by little, because a violent pain like that is too quick. You don't even feel the intensity. Good pain, really good pain, is the kind that comes slowly. It hurts a little today, it burns a little tomorrow, it hurts every day, it hurts all day long, so you know it hurts. It's not something that just passed...

It won't be like that. And it's no use. There's no Father Francis, there's nobody! There's no Jesus Christ… Didn't Jesus Christ sat that you have to

carry the cross? So, she'll have to carry the cross! I carried it...! When it was time to put the cross here, on my back here, they put it there, and I carried it. Now she'll carry it!

Look, and it's a heavy cross, and besides being heavy, I hang up there, I climb on top of the cross, and I stay... oh... oh... shaking like this to make it heavier. I want to see those shoulders skinned, raw flesh. Alive, red... (And almost in a whisper:) And it's no use preparing your soft talk, setting up your little confessional there...

I've seen many people arrive at the confessional, put their little knees there, put their little hands like this... "Father, forgive me because I have sinned!" You know? I've seen it. And after leaving there... The priest gives that penance. He prays so many Hail Marys, Creeds, and then leaves and goes over there to trample, poison, cause misery...

Where is Jesus Christ, who wasn't there at that time? So, now he's not going to put Jesus Christ on top of me, no. Because when it was time to defend me, Christ wasn't there. So, when it's time for me to collect what they owe me, Christ isn't there either.

-You mean she's not innocent, right?

She pauses and asks:
-Am I crazy? Do I look crazy? Do I sound crazy?
Am I talking like a crazy person? Then I'm not crazy, am I?

-Then, she's guilty...

-I don't know if she's guilty. I'm not judging anyone. I'm not judging; I'm not concerned with guilt. I collect debts. That's all.

-You mean that when someone suffers, it's because they deserve it, right? Because they were wrong, because they were bad... Isn't that right?

She avoids the question; aware it's a trap. Annoyance tightens her. Guilt is irrelevant to her.

-I'm collecting a debt that's owed to me.

-And when you suffered? You owed something too. Or were you innocent?
-Ah, I should have counted on that.

At this point, she turns the conversation to her advantage, accusing us of excusing and justifying her victim. She pretends to be offended and wronged, insisting that when it was her turn to suffer, no one took up her cause to defend her. So why all the talk, the appeals, and what she called an “hearing...”

-Look, I'm tired of this business! I'm tired of listening; they've already spoken; I've been to other places... What are you going to say? That it's in the past, that I also owe it? I've already been told that. I've already heard that. So what? That won't solve my situation or problem. It's no use; don't bother with talk. There's only one conversation here that interests me. Do you have any ideas, any suggestions on how to make someone suffer?
If you have a suggestion like that, I'll accept it. If not, let's pack up, and I'll get on with my life.

-Yes, I do. A very good suggestion. I know someone who is an expert in suffering.

-Is it old Lucifer?

-No, it's Christ.

-Look, you can call me cynical. I know I am. You can say I'm no good. I also know I'm no good. I know they call me for those heavy jobs. You know... if you put the heavy business on me... I know all that. The affair with her is mine, personal, and other people’s too.

I'll tell you something. I don't have a roof over my head, it's true. I don't have a house, I live wandering. I am what they call a tormented soul. Do you know what a tormented soul is, from a cemetery? Those who go to work in the cemetery call me, you know? And cemetery work, you can ask anyone, is tough work. You have to be people who have the guts to do it. I go and I do it. I know. Are things bad? Call so-and-so... And I go. I know all of that, I admit it. I live wandering...

I still need a lot of things (material things) that you need there... The other day, they told me at a place I went, you know? It was because of that girl... I went. They said: "Ah! because the sister needs to give up

these things. You need to follow your own path..." I know all about this, but I'm not going to give up anything; I'm not going to follow any path, because I'm not doing well... I'm suffering... I recognize that I'm suffering, but the person who owes me is also suffering and will be much worse. It will get ***much worse*** indeed.

-Actually, apart from the initial charade, you've been very frank.

-Yes, because if I could pass myself off as a sufferer... I wanted to play the sufferer, because then you'd come with that little word: "My sister..." I'd end up leaving, and they wouldn't mess with my case.

She then speaks of her own abandonment. After what she calls the "sad reality" of death, she felt alone, without friends or relatives, but the subject is extremely painful for her, and she interrupts herself to say:

-Oh! Look, don't mess with that, but don't mess with it because things will boil over here if you do. It's better to take the pot off the fire... I'm currently living to see this creature in a worse state. When she's in a worse state, when I think it's enough, then I'll take care of my life. But for now, I won't. There's no Saint Anthony who's going to save me.

As for Christ, she says that, of course, she knows him. She was even a "Daughter of Mary," faithfully fulfilling all her religious duties, with a little blue ribbon around her neck and everything else.

This, then, was her position and, as we have seen, it was unyielding and, within her particular logic, full of reasons. She was in no way prepared to accept that, just as the suffering she inflicted on her victim today was authorized by the errors that the latter had committed against her, what she suffered in the past also resulted from an equally culpable karmic record.

She could not agree, either, that she would suffer again in the future the consequences of her gesture today, because she was only collecting what was owed to her, nothing more... She could not be condemned for merely knocking on the other's door with a bill in her hands. Forgiveness? Unthinkable! Not at all!

When the indoctrinator begins to probe into the personal territory of her life, she defends herself vigorously, repelling any attempt at closeness.

She even says that everyone in the past who called her "my dear" did so only to take something from her. And she had nothing left to give.
-What do you want to take from me? I have nothing left.

-I would like to take away your hatred, if you can give me anything.

The remark seems to have some effect on her spirit, for a brief silence falls. After a short time, the story starts to unfold. She speaks as if she were thinking aloud:
-The beautiful lady... The Lady of the Night... She also called me "my dear"...

The vengeance she is now exacting comes from afar because the person she calls the "Lady of the Night," upon dying, fell into the hands of the mob she had harmed. They were all together in the dens of hatred, in the same place, but "her little saints" moved and took her from there.

-Yet, they didn't take her from me, and wherever she goes, I will find her, because it's no use putting on a mask, no, because I ***know*** her! Do you understand? It's no use making little circles, little rituals, nothing! They are all fools, idiots: They don't even know what they are doing.

Her story is truly tragic, and only with great difficulty and much patience were we able to get to it. It took place in Tuscany. She was a young woman of modest origins, fifteen years old, very beautiful, and like every young woman, dreamy, a little vain, and ambitious.

She desired a successful marriage with a man well-endowed with fortune and, who knows, with physical beauty. She was subtly lured to a party at the residence of the beautiful and rich Lady of the Night. This lady lent her a long formal dress, and she went. A sophisticated and corrupt society gathered there. She was a pure young woman. Let us hear her narrative in her own words.

I was deceived; I was tricked. I was just a modest girl, and she—married to a wealthy man—pulled me into her world only because I was so pretty. She wanted to display me like a prized possession. I went along, foolishly, because I was too young to know better. Only fifteen! My heart pounds with shame at my own naïveté.

-Yes, you were somewhat naive, but you also had your ambitions, didn't you, my dear?
Of course, what woman doesn't? Who doesn't like a pretty jewel to adorn her neck? A diadem? Who doesn't? She did give the jewels, but she didn't say it was for that.

My mother? She didn't know. When she found out, the damage was already done.

-And you continued living with your mother and father?

-No, I didn't. Oh! Darn!

-I'm trying to understand, my dear, please be patient...

-I didn't know she had turned her house into a brothel. I didn't even know what a brothel was!

The instructor was under the impression that she had also contributed, accepting the situation, even if, initially, somewhat naively. Realizing her mistake, she apologized with complete conviction and sincerity. She had indeed been mistaken. It had all been a sordid plot hatched against a somewhat dreamy and ambitious girl, but clean and honest.
It is also more than evident how sincere she was in proclaiming that she didn't want any of that, that she didn't desire that situation, that she was truly deceived.

— Do you know what she did? It wasn't just to me. She took us to her house... Of course, I was deceived. She wanted to introduce me to society because her husband knew important men, and I could arrange an important marriage, even a nobleman. But that's normal; of course, it was in my interest! I was a fifteen-year-old girl, young, naive. ***Today, I know I* was naive, precisely because I'm not naive anymore.** Today I'm worthless. I know.

There is a pause while we debate her motivations. She is still thinking that the indoctrinator is trying to put his victim on an altar and condemn her as an adventuress, which is not true, although the indoctrinator honestly acknowledges that he was wrong to judge her as too ambitious.

— But wait, let me tell you. Your sweet girl... she took me to her house. I didn't go there to sleep with a man; no. I didn't go for that. I went because she would have a party. She lent me a pretty dress. Of course, I wanted a pretty dress. What girl wouldn't? I went, happy. But she got me drunk, gave me a dose... I don't know. The next day, I went to see what had happened. I didn't even understand what had happened. And here, what did she do? "If you leave here, I'll tell your parents." And then I got scared. So, I stayed there my whole life. I turned into trash. I was the merchandise that she sold to whoever wanted, to whoever paid more.

That's it. And the day a gentleman arrived — many years later — who really liked me, and wanted to take me away from there because he was a good man... Then... She saw that he was so good that she wanted to keep him for herself. He was a rich man. That's when all the fuss started... All that mess...

She ended it all and was fine, because she got rid of her husband, and became even richer... All that. And we were left in the worst situation.

There were other girls too... It wasn't just that. Look, I have a lot of resentment. This lord who liked me... I don't even know if I should say this... He liked me, I liked him... I had a son with him. And she took him from me, because I couldn't stay there, being good, with a child. It was a boy...

And you want me to forgive your saint; put a little crown on her head? Give her the crown, if you want. Put her on an altar.

-No, my dear. Then I'm not making myself clear to you. Listen. I'm not justifying or defending her behavior. You perfectly recognize that she is suffering because she deserves it.

-I don't think she's suffering, no. You guys think so. She deserves what she's getting and should have much more.

-Because she was wrong, wasn't she? Because she committed all those crimes that you're mentioning.

She stubbornly refuses to acknowledge this aspect that would lead her to a dead end — that is, the unquestionable truth that, when she suffered those horrors, she was also at fault before the law. This would suddenly

take away what she considered to be her inalienable right to revenge, the reason for her own life, as she understood it.

-I lost a whole life… I didn't lose just one; I lost many lives, because there, if it weren't for... It changed my whole destiny; I have lived suffering. I knew hell, a living hell. I know. I know what hell is.

-I believe in the purity of your dreams when you were a fifteen-year-old girl. I had a different idea. I thought you had your ambitions.

-It's very easy to judge...

-Yes. I'm sorry. I see that it was truly a very distressing situation and that you wouldn't have chosen that spontaneously. You were induced, led, and dragged. And it was a very painful, very agonizing life, full of anguish and disappointments.

-Would you want a life like that for a daughter?

-No, my dear, of course not.

-My father disowned me. Then I couldn't even use the family name. They were poor, but they were honest. And in Tuscany, for you to be a woman like that, it wasn't easy, no. You were a leftover, trash!

-Yes, you have a lot to tell, and when you talk about suffering, it's clear that you really understand it.

-I understand. The day I was old and no longer useful, I was thrown out on the street and had nowhere to go. I had no family, I had nothing!

The instructor makes another appeal to the only valid argument in such cases—that of her prior guilt—but she simply insists that this doesn't matter—what matters is what she went through.

-Even if I owed her, she didn't have the right. You all keep preaching that it's God who collects... Isn't it God who has to collect? So, she didn't have the right to do that to me.

That's what they tell me. I'm reasoning like you. If that's the case, then she didn't have the right, even if I owed her. But she did it. And so, now, I give myself the right to collect. Whether I have the right to collect or not doesn't

matter. I'm giving myself... that right. As long as I can do it, as long as I can breathe, I won't let go. There's no Christian who could make me...

Although there was no revenge in the life lived in Tuscany, since the other led her to an abject situation, it is clear that our dear sister was there redeeming a previous mistake, according to God's just laws. To this reasoning she promptly replies:

-Then God is very bad, because to throw me into that life... Then I'll tell you; it's better not to have God.

-Daughter, and do you also think God is bad because He doesn't protect our sister from you? In that case, He should protect her, shouldn't He?

The argument seems to impress her, but she still evades it:
-But she owes me, and I didn't owe her.

-You know? You owed someone, you owed divine law. Maybe not her, specifically. There is no innocent suffering, my dear. No one suffers without owing.

Have you ever demanded something from someone who doesn't owe you anything? She owes and is paying, and when you paid, you didn't owe? So, the law only works for others?

She pauses and comments:
-Yes, Father... I am cynical. Don't expect anything good from me; I have nothing good inside me...

The debate continues even after the prayer, but the indoctrinator begins the work of magnetic induction, which is long and difficult due to her tenacious resistance. Finally, she gives in, resting her head on the table...

We assure her that she will be treated with all respect and affection and that she should try to trust us. The regression in time begins. When she seems to have reached an intersection of time/space, the indoctrinator asks the first question:
-Where are you?”

-I'm at my house.

-Where is that?

-At the palace. It's a villa, almost a palace.

She's married, very rich, and powerful. She lives with her husband and children. As for the exact location, she still seems somewhat uncertain, but ends up saying it's on the Palatine Hill. Her husband is a consul.

Conditioned by the modern meaning of the word, the scholar imagines him as a member of the diplomatic corps of some country living there in Italy, but it's nothing like that. Only later does it occur to her that he is a Consul in the ancient context of the Roman Empire, where certain high-level rulers were called so.

-What happened there that caught your attention? What was that life like? You said you're at home... What are you seeing there?
-My children. There are two of them. Two young men. Very handsome. I'm here because we're having a party today. My children are about to enter puberty. So, we're having a party. The slaves are waiting for the wine and fruit. Someone hasn't arrived from the market with the fruit yet.

-Did you invite many people?

-Yes.

-Your husband has important friends. Who are the most important people he invited?

-All his friends. A senator and his wife are coming. I know their names, but I can't say them. I don't know why.

-It doesn't matter. Continue...

-My sons... they need to be initiated into manhood, but I don't want them to seek out these women...

Adventurers?

-Yes.

-How did you do it, then?

-We have many young slaves. There is a foreigner… I don't know… my husband bought her. She came… I don't know where from, a distant land.

-Cappadocia? Is it a land? Cappadocia? Is that a land?

-Yes. Cappadocia. Go on.

-She is very beautiful. She was the daughter of an important family there.

-Important people there... And how did she become a slave and get bought by your husband?

-Wars... conquests...

-She was a princess there, perhaps.

-I think so. My husband doesn't give me details. I'm going to set her apart to serve my sons. She and another one. They are two sisters. They are beautiful! They will be concubines of my sons.

-But do you need a party for that?

-No. The party is something else. It's to celebrate their entry into life. This (the initiation) will be later. The party was very beautiful. Lots of wine. The senator came with his entourage, his family... Luxurious litters! Beautiful slaves... Then, I offered these young women to my sons, and they didn't want them; they cried...

-But they were slaves, weren't they? They had to obey.

-Yes. I said it was an honor for them. One of them took out a beautiful dagger that my eldest son had received. It was a gift that the Senator brought. It has (note the gift) a handle studded with stones. And she killed herself.
It was such a disgusting thing!

-That was at the party?

-Yes. After the men drink, they retire to the triclinium and take the women there, and this servant, who should have been happy to serve, killed herself.

-So, the party ended?

-No. What is a slave who kills herself?

-And then? You ordered the body to be removed, and the party continued?

-Yes. So disgusting... I'll choose another one tomorrow.

-And the sister?

-The sister submitted herself.

-And did she stay with her son?

-Yes.

-And did she marry him?

Deeply shocked, she replies, somewhat indignantly:
-No! A slave... How awful! How can you say that?

-And what happened to her?

-To her?

It seems that it never occurred to her to think about it, and she repeats the question to herself:
-What happened to her, huh? I think we sold her later.

-And you never heard from her again?

-No. That she's a slave? What questions! What kind of house are you from that you don't understand these things?

-I really don't know the customs there. You have to explain them to me.

-So, you think she was sold and disappeared?

-Yes. We trade slaves from time to time. There are so many slaves...

-I see. And your son, your sons, in fact, were they very happy later on? Did they get married?"
-They did.

-Were you also happy and did you live a long life?

-I did. How did I die?

-Very old, already?

-I was. *I had my grandchildren. My children's children. I am happy, very happy. We are happy, we are rich, I have no worries.*

-No worries. Of course. And upon dying, leaving your body, you went to the spiritual world, didn't you?

That's a strange question.

-Spiritual world? she asks, astonished.

-To the region of the dead...

-I went to the gods. I must have gone to the gods. I don't know. I didn't die—I'm alive here.

-That's true. What was your name, my daughter?

-Me? Flávia.

The indoctrinator now wishes to bring her back to existence in Tuscany, where she went to the Lady of the Night's house, but asks her to keep in her memory the entire episode lived in ancient Rome, in order to confront the two symmetrical existences of action and reaction. She seems not to understand at first, but it is certain that her spirit knows what it is about.

-What should I understand?

She asks. Soon, however, the crisis of identity and location in space/time begins.

-Where am I? (Pause) Francesca... Francesca.

-Who is Francesca?

-Me. Francesca Rinaldi.

-And the lady?

-Which lady?

-The one who took you to the house.

-Lady? I know her. She lives there in that palace.

-Yes, but did you meet her back then, on the Palatine Hill?

-I don't know.

-You don't know? Doesn't she remind you of anyone?

-I don't know. I don't recognize her. She's not one of my friends.

-You remember that life where you had two children, where you forced the slaves, and one of them killed herself, don't you?

-Yes.

-And this other life in Tuscany doesn't suggest anything to you? Doesn't explain anything?

-Who is this lady? How am I supposed to know? I can't know... Because you don't remember a slave. I don't even remember what she looked like!

-But, my daughter, the spirit is always the same. Aren't you the same? Don't you remember what it was like there?

-Yes, but I don't remember what the slaves looked like. There were so many! How am I supposed to remember? I want to go back there. I want my children. I was so happy! Take me back...

-Listen, Flávia. Pay attention. You were happy, your children were happy; you were rich and powerful, but what about those girls? One killed herself; you don't even know what happened to the other.

-But they were slaves!

-But weren't they human beings?

-You buy slaves. The vanquished aren't people.

-Yes, my daughter, but if the issue is nobility, you yourself said that they were noble too. Weren't they human beings, with pain, with suffering, with hope? Don't you think that they had the right to a happy and normal marriage?

-They were slaves...

-You were a slave too... In Tuscany.

-Me? Me?! She got revenge on me, so... So that's it! A lowly little slave... Damned! So that's it! She had no right!

-Do you?

-She was a slave. You buy a slave. What's wrong with that? My God, these men create the laws, and we live according to the laws, and is that wrong?

-I don't know. You know. It's not up to me to judge. It's up to you. The decision is yours, my daughter.

-Get me out of here... What do you want me to do?

-I want you to think about all these things. I know it's difficult to make such a sudden decision, and that it will change your life so much, but you have beings in the spiritual world, my dear, who love you and are waiting for you, who await you...

-My husband was so good!

-You loved him, and he loved you, too. I know the customs of the time were very cruel, but that doesn't justify, my dear, the things you did. Someone needs to start forgiving, forgetting, and starting a new life.

-Why didn't she forgive?

-You're not forgiving either! Why don't you forgive, then?

-But she did terrible things to me! I gave her shelter, clothes, everything.

-Yes, my daughter, she also gave you shelter, clothes, jewelry, everything.

-The same thing, exactly the same. If that's the case, then she has no fault whatsoever with you, but it's not like that, my dear. God's laws were disobeyed.

-Oh! What a mess... So that's what life is? That's what life is all about?

-No. That's not what life is about. You're the one who makes your life this mess. You say you don't want to leave at all. So, everything will continue like this. You're free to do as you please. Keep doing it if you want. I'm not sure if it suits you.

-It's like I'm in a fog. I can't see anything clearly.

-Of course! You don't want to see, do you, my daughter? What do you decide, then? Would you like to stay with us for a little while to think everything through before making a decision?

-I just started thinking about those boys.

-That's right. Where are they? Who are they? Where are they? This was a long time ago, wasn't it? Who was the emperor back then?

-Emperor? Oh... My God, why don't I remember?

-It doesn't matter. It's just curiosity, only to help you place yourself more in time, but it must have been back in the time of the Caesars, because you said...

-Yes. Caesar! I think that was it. Dio... dio... Diocletian! (1)

-That emperor persecuted many Christians. It was a time of great cruelty. Cruelty was considered almost normal, but no one is justified because they made mistakes, when it was common to do it ... Do you agree? So, do you want to stay with us, daughter?

-Yes. I've been thinking about these things now. I wanted my children... My children, my husband...
-What were their names?

-Decius and Cassius.

-Beautiful names!

-I want my children. I want my children! (Cries).

-But if you want to go and meet your children, you have to give up this thankless task that does not help you at all, my dear. That builds nothing for you. Do you understand?

-I want my family!

Finally, her emotions break free:

-Oh, my God! I'm so alone! Oh, my God... I have two beautiful children... (Cries desperately). Is this what life is? My God, is this life?

-No, my daughter. This is what we make of our lives. Life doesn't have to be like this; it doesn't have to be like this.

-We are pawns in the hands of fate. I didn't want this life. How did I end up here? My children, my friends... My God! What did I come here to do? And now, suddenly, what affliction, my God! Oh... where am I, my God? This is a nightmare...

-No. It's a reality, but this agony will pass. You will readjust and be able to meet your loved ones. Let go of this futile struggle that builds nothing for you.

-I'm afraid. Suddenly I'm afraid! I'm scared! I'm lost... I don't know where I am. How did I end up here alone?

-We recommend that you go with our friends to rest and meditate before making a decision.

So, she is taken away.

P.S.
The reincarnated "Lady of the Night" had other spiritual adversaries, some of whom were brought to our Group. She managed to regain her balance, thank God. Some rather serious residual problems remained in the family context, but as far as possible, things improved.

NOTE:

DIOCLETIAN - (245-313) - Roman Emperor from 284 to 305. In the volume CAESAR AND CHRIST, of his respected HISTORY, Will Durant summarizes in one of his elegant sentences the task of Diocletian as Emperor: "Augustus created the Empire, Aurelian saved it, Diocletian reorganized it."

It is also Durant who considers him "a man of genius, less competent in the art of war than as a statesman." Determined to strengthen the system, he waged intense combat against Christianity, simultaneously promoting the cult of himself as the incarnation of Jupiter. Maximian, his partner in power, modestly accepted being "only" Hercules.

It was a time of luxury and absolutism. The population was transformed into a caste society, in Durant's words, "with illiterate peasants at one extreme and absolute monarchy at the other." This was the extravagant period in which our beloved sister lived.

At that time, slaves were not even considered human beings, and everything was permitted to the owners of the world.

Diocletian dressed in gold-embroidered silk robes; his sandals were decorated with precious stones; he wore a pearl diadem, and to reach him in the privacy of the palace, one had to pass through a closed circle of ceremonious eunuchs and titled chamberlains. And upon arrival, whoever arrived there had to kneel and kiss the hem of his tunic.

THE TIGER GATE

Another companion arrives, offering his services. "We need to serve more to be worthy of God," he says.

As a servant of Christ, he claims to have heard the call ("Go and serve"). He does not choose a task or consider whether our group actually needs his services—his main concern is fulfilling his need to serve, rather than addressing the group's needs. His voice is slow, his tone solemn and unctuous. He claims to have vast experience: finances (?!), soul guidance, sermons, mediumistic dictations, scientific research...

He proposes that we begin a consultation service on the present, past, and future, in which he will assist people in need.

As the dialogue drags on in that artificial voice, the instructor urges him to resume his normal speaking tone after this "introduction."

He still insists, feigning offense. He came to make an offer; if we do not accept it, then fine—he will make it elsewhere. The indoctrinator clarifies that it is not him we are refusing, but we do not see how his proposal fits into the context of our work, which is of a different nature.

He also asks him to assume his true personality and be loyal and frank with us as we are with him. He smiles awkwardly and reacts with irony: "Wasn't that a play?"

He had to play his part... Are we perhaps taking him for a mystifier? Could it be the medium's animism? Finally, he surrenders:

- You have a little radar, don't you? You are getting very smart! After all, what do we want? You came speaking of the Gospel, with an appropriate attitude of respect, and we have not accepted it.

You then explained that you had already left the "band of flesh," where you wasted precious time. You could have enjoyed yourself much more. What is the purpose, ultimately, of the physical body?
To illustrate your "doctrine," you recount an example in which you

worked as a "counselor" in a consultation service similar to the one you have proposed to establish among us.

A young woman asked whether she should attend one center or another. At one center, she heard a lecture emphasizing the importance of detaching from material things to focus on spiritual growth. She seeks guidance on how to proceed.

The “counselor” asks her: “Are you a disembodied spirit or an incarnate one?” “Incarnate,” she says. “Then live as an incarnate one. Enjoy life. Later, you will have the opportunity to live the life of a disembodied one.”

At this point, however, he is convinced that we do not agree with his "doctrine" and asks, somewhat disconcerted:
-It is not working, is it?

Deep down, he confesses, he lacked conviction. He had been tasked by his superiors with sowing confusion, insecurity, instability, and distrust among us. And he was the perfect fit for that task! It turns out that during the week, he had observed us closely, one by one, at times of his choosing. He had seen normal people struggling with their problems and difficulties.

He had seen something he had long since lost: conviction and a certain degree of patience in the face of life's setbacks. To create a breach in us, he needed to incite us to anger. He found us, however, too passive, that is, resigned.

The difficulties didn't impress us as much as he expected or hoped, and this complicated things for him.

Not that he saw redeemed saints in us—he certainly knew our weaknesses—but it seems that the little bit of goodwill he saw in us made him think. However, his mission was quite clear: to win our acceptance, to then expose us.

After all, which side was the truth on? In the past, he had tried to do everything Christ recommended. It did not work. Men, in his view, are very difficult. They never understand you. You cannot be kind to them. Deep

down, religions are all the same, and men are always the same. Spiritism is also full of opportunists, seeking position and prominence. It is not difficult to take advantage of people like that. He informs realistically:
-They want to.

He begins, however, to question such methods and motivations. He had previously thought all of this was perfectly correct.

We knew, given our tasks, that the organization he belonged to was tasked with "collecting" karmic debts— other people's, of course, through the most horrendous processes of "physical" and moral torture.

He had had the opportunity to "see as *people*, people who had been '*animals*", and that had left him confused and shaken.

(It is worth clarifying this somewhat enigmatic reference. The dreadful punishment processes they resorted to often produced extremely serious deformations and perispiritual mutilations, which transformed human beings into veritable monsters with an animalized appearance. After being rescued by our spiritual friends, these beings were treated appropriately and recovered their normal condition, or at least something more compatible with the human "physical" form. With the consent of our advisors, he had visited some of these entities already in recovery.)

-After all, which side is the truth on?

He asked himself again.

-What is Christ's objective?

He confesses that the Messiah "is stuck in his throat" to this day. In his view, both Christ and His followers are defeated, vanquished.

The indoctrinator observes that, in this case, Peter, Andrew, Paul, or Magdalene should be there in their organization, exposed to suffering. Would they be? The argument seems to impress him, but he insists that he is tired of fighting for the Messiah. And here begins the narrative of an episode, which he remembered spontaneously, without the need for regression. Let us hear it in his own words:

-Can I tell you about my last disappointment with the Messiah? It was during the time of the famous Crusades. (1) I was Christian, like everyone else. We were Christian because we were. So, I went to the Crusades too.

The First Crusade... that terrible one! I went there all dressed up, neatly, handsomely, with all those clothes. I was consecrated... You know how the gentlemen were all consecrated before leaving for the Crusade? I was consecrated properly, with my sword blessed, everything blessed, clothes, and everything. Even the horse was blessed. Everything. I went there.

Yeah. I fought; I killed... Of course! I was defending a place... You are in a war to fight, aren't you? Very well. I came back... I believe I'm a hero. I came back, no... I mean, I did not even come back, because I died there, as they say, in the confusion. So, when I returned, a believer... "Well, I am a hero. I will be received exactly as Christ says, because I was there defending... (his tomb)." "I get there and they greet me with a look of dismay, saying:
-But it is all wrong, my brother! It was not like that at all!

-Then, I will tell you, right there! I say: "So if it was not like that at all, what am I doing with all these clothes on my body? That outfit portrayed a conviction, didn't it? Then I gave up...

-And why do you say that disappointed you?

-Of course! You think you are going to get there and conquer a place, and someone tells you it is all wrong! That it was not like that at all, and that instead of going to a place you are hoping for, a good place, they say: "Now you are going to have to go back because..." Then, they started listing:
"Look, this guy you killed had a family, he had children, whom you left in orphanhood. This one... This one..."

-Then they started making a list of things, adding them to my accounts, a huge list of... (crimes).

-Yes, but I still don't understand why Christ is responsible for this.

-Of course! Wasn't I a Christian? Wasn't I there defending Him; His tomb, His name?

-But did He authorize it? Did He order the killing?

-But didn't He authorize those who preached the Crusade and who consecrated me to go there? Weren't they authorized? Of course they were! So, who has the authority? Then tell me: What's all this confusion?

-For example: With what authority do you come here to propose your collaboration?

-I came with the authority my companions gave me.

-And do they have the authority to give it to you?

-Of course they do. They have the authority to give it to me.

-The same thing there. It was not Christ who gave it. They invested themselves with that authority.

-And here your companions let me come too. They knew what I was doing (in the group), and they let me.

-But of course. Your presence here is very grateful, very important to us.

-They even told me—and that disconcerted me... They still receive me as if I were *that* important person. I say: Look! I came here today to break this down.

"Okay, my brother, go in peace." I mean, I think he's going to be scared... He says: "Okay, my brother. Go in peace. Do as you see fit... whatever your heart desires." They still say that to me! I mean: he lost control, he was mistaken about Christ, because I also defended him, and look what happened to me.

-No. You thought that by killing, you were defending him. Christ does not order anyone to kill.

-But wasn't it a Holy War, my friend? Of course! Wasn't it supposed to protect the holy places from the Jews?

-So, did Christ order the killing?

-Killing Jews because Jews were nothing. What they told us was this: Jews are pagans and pagans are nothing!

-Well, please, I am not condemning or judging you. In the Second Crusade, I was also there, encouraging that slaughter, and, therefore, I have a responsibility as great or greater than yours. I also thought I was vested with the authority to preach because someone ordered me to preach.

-I thought that day that Christ didn't know what He was doing, because He orders a crusade, we go... there's that whole ceremony.

You go, you win, and when you come back, you say: "Well! I am going to receive the warrior's rest, the laurels of victory. Where's my laurel wreath?"

-And who received it? A spiritual friend?

(Pause). - Never mind. When I asked, “How about it, do I go in or not?"
-"No, you do not!” – “Well, *how* can I not go in?”

He cannot accept, then, the idea that Christ is not the One who is ultimately responsible, the One who ordered the massacre.

-But His emissaries were there!... So, who should I listen to? They said they were speaking in the name of Christ? You are confusing me even more... So, why didn't Christ come down and say: "Look! It's all wrong. No one's going! It is over. Isn't He the Boss? He could have said so."

-You too. Says the indoctrinator.

-When you presented yourself here, you came as a worker of Christ.

-But that was part of the program to confuse! Didn't I already tell you?
He says aloud.

-Exactly. It is the same program you followed there.

-But it was not Christ who sent me there! I know...

-Nor here. (A long silence shows that the argument struck deeper).
Was it He who sent you here? Saying that you are one of His workers?

His difficulty in understanding Christ is very great, as can be seen. When the indoctrinator tells him that he is seeking Christ in the wrong ways, he

says that this is exactly what they told him there (in the spiritual world). He refuses to identify this spiritual friend, whom he clearly respects.

-Can you imagine my disappointment? It's like you going to someone's door to give them a bouquet of flowers, and they come over, take it, and throw it away. "I don't like flowers, my friend." Or: "Go back. The person isn't here anymore." Whatever it is. All I know is that I have it in my hand. And what do I do with it now?

From then on, he gave up trying. He has tried so much, and it did not work. He is tired of men. And suddenly, he confesses:

-I once had a daughter burned at the stake... Burned alive! Why? Because she was an angel!

In his view, the blame still lies with Christ. When the indoctrinator challenges this theory, he comes up with another:

-If no one is to blame, then we are loose in the world, lost, each one is master of himself.

That's why he advises us to enjoy life while we are here in the flesh, because when we get there, they say we did everything backwards.

A little later, the conversation changes direction again to provide additional information, after a pause:

-I'm worried. I was also very shaken by a case there that you... I can only imagine that it was you who took her in, because I do not see the person there anymore. But she's someone I felt very sorry for. You see things in there... that even as a man of experience, suffering, tortured, and a torturer—and I've been both, huh? —you feel sorry for. She was a girl who only had a perfect head, a face. The rest of her body was a mess. And she disappeared from there.

(Referring to a poor creature we rescued one night, under the supervision of our spiritual friends, who later manifested herself mediumistically for her perispiritual reconstruction. We clearly remember carrying in our arms a being, of whom only the face could be distinguished, indeed very

beautiful; the rest of the body was a tragic shapeless mass.) The narrator continues:

-And did you know they made her crawl like that? Her nickname was 'Black Widow'—you know what a black widow is? That spider—because when she moved, she was all disjointed, right? I felt so sorry for her... You are saying you know who she is. Can you give me any news about her?

-She is undergoing treatment. She regained her 'physical', human form and finished the task she performed on herself during the hard training she experienced back in your group.

— I felt so sorry for her. Sometimes they'd order me, on my shift... I think it's a special hatred of our Chief of Chiefs, who sits at the head. Because it's like this in those places: there are a bunch of chairs like this, like this, like this, right up there, like a ladder. (The rigid and terrible hierarchy of shadows!) It was by his order—the one who sits at the top of everything.

There are some people there who have to be reminded of certain things at certain times. So, sometimes, it was my day. They take turns, they say, so we don't feel sorry. So... we'd take a list and go around with the whip. "This whipping, do you know why? This, this, this that you did at such and such a time." Or, sometimes, the creature would be passed around the circle (2) and say, "You know that turn you took just now? Because of this, this, this..." So, when it was my turn, I always felt sorry for her. I never did things...

-And you say you don't know where God is? He is in compassion, my son.

-But how does God allow this? I have often asked myself that. Yeah. There really is not... Why did God allow that creature, with such a beautiful face like this girl, to go through this? Could God... What kind of Father is this? Is God a father? You say God is a Father?

-I say, no—He ***is*** a Father.

-Fathers and mothers do not torture their children. Because it is not just physical torture, no. The worst torture is moral torture. And that is there, too.

He knew the nature and extent of the girl's mistakes because he was forced

to read to her the crime that corresponded to each lash or each turn of the "wheel." He thought, however, that "those mistakes did not match that face. They were terrible things!"

-No, my dear. You're confusing physical beauty with moral beauty. God exists so much that the time came when she was safe from her torturers.

-Do you know she moved as if she had no bones in her body?

-It was failures, very serious faults, that led her to this situation, wasn't it?

-How will God convince you of your spiritual reality, of the need you have—you and I and all of us—to assume our responsibilities if, repeatedly, repeatedly, we refuse the call to good?

You told me that when you ended your existence after the Crusade, you came here demanding your rights, or what you believed to be your rights. Well. The spiritual companion who welcomed you—a spiritual friend you respect, you love, and who accompanies your steps and desires to see you redeemed—what did he say to you? He made an appeal: "Please, my son. Come back there. Forget all this. Let's start all over again."

So, the call to peace, to harmony, to hope, to love, to charity was made to you. You came back here and deliberately chose the error again. There comes a point where the law—through one's own conscience, the voice of God within us—demands another solution.

This appeal to goodness is not serving, is not awakening the Spirit. Then pain must come. It is not that God wants us to suffer. There are spirits that evolve without needing that. We who are stubborn need pain. You know that a child, when born, only realizes that the body is theirs because some spots hurt. They discover: "This little foot here is mine because it hurts, I can feel it."

This self-awareness, the awareness that we are responsible beings, only awakens in many of us through the most extreme pain. Only after experiencing pain, do we hear God's voice within us. It is there. So much, that even in the deepest abysses of agony and affliction in which you, for example, live or have lived until now, you also felt compassion for a human being. God was and is in you. Isn't it right? Do you agree? Doesn't that make sense?

-I don’t know... I've heard so much... But then, my friend, it's difficult; it's very difficult for you there on Earth to find the way.

-The way is in the Gospel. It's clearly there for the whole world to see. Open the Gospel, you who know it so well. There's a solution for everything.

-Ah, my friend, but it turns out that we read in the Gospel that you should have patience, but we forget that you're irritable.

-Why are you irritable?"

-Because we're people, for crying out loud! (Pause). I'll stop this because I'm already justifying myself here, which makes no sense.

He begins, then, to admit that he too has his faults, given that he has become defensive.

-What do I do with my life? I can't go back there, because it won't work anymore..."

The indoctrinator interrupts the conversation to pray.

When they speak again, the manifesting Spirit informs them that he has reached a conclusion: that there is only one reality in Christ—that of the cross, that of the burden one carries.

The indoctrinator says that above the reality of the cross is the reality of the resurrection, the victory over death, over evil. This victory is achieved by mastering one's passions. The demonstrator informs them shortly after that he has tried many ways out, and none of them worked. He recalls an ancient type of torture, according to which the condemned person was placed before two doors: one opened to freedom and the other to a tiger or lion that devoured him.

-I think I always opened the door where the tiger or lion was. That, however, isn't bad luck, as he says; it's a choice, even though he apparently didn't know the beast was back there. On the other hand, life isn't a game, as he claims, because the game presupposes the idea of bad luck, luck, and chance.

The worst part is that every time you win back there on Earth, when you get here, you find the same person with those pious, downcast eyes, looking at you: -"My brother, once again... Regrettably, you failed..."

-What the hell! So, when do you win? The last time I said to him: "You know what? I don't want to see your face in front of me again!" It was so; since the last time (the most recent reincarnation). Yes, it was. Then, when I returned again, we arrived at a place where there was a person leading...

There were two paths. The young man said, "Come!" I said, "What? I'm going that way to meet him again?" Then I chose another path. (He smiles and concludes:) You're going to say I chose the tiger's door again, aren't you?

-Of course.

-That's the path I'm on to this day.

-So, you know the tiger is over there...

-I knew that when I got there, he would say again:
-'You failed again, my friend. Regrettably...'" -I even memorized the words.

-What do you intend to do now? Shall we open the right door?

-Yeah... I asked him that. You're reminding me of things... I asked him: "What do you want me to do, anyway?" He said: -"My son, the Lord said: Go and sin no more!"
-I don't know how to understand the saints. Saints use a language that clashes with our lives...

-But how did they become saints? Wasn't it through pain, affliction, anguish, mistakes... and repeated mistakes, but they always rose to walk toward the light? You can do it too. You are neither better nor worse than anyone else. We are all equal before the Father. What's stopping you from choosing the good, choosing the right path? Is someone stopping you? It's you.

-What's the Earth for? Isn't it for us to live on? But is everyone forced to

live on it have to..." (pause). I asked him once if it was fair that my daughter was burned. He ***said it was.***

I never forgave him for that. He said it was fair! I said, -"But she was an angel!" He replied, -"That's exactly why." Understand now...

The indoctrinator begins to magnetize him in order to induce the process of memory regression to help him solve this mystery; this impasse.

-Only those who have children can understand. When I saw that girl there, who was just a mass of soft things and a face, I remembered my daughter. I think that's why I felt so sorry for her...

He confesses to being tired of so much struggle and begins to yawn. Shortly after, she plunges into a state of magnetic torpor and begins to relive a fragment of his past:
-This is horrible! Are you listening? The fire crackling... Her flesh frying...! All this for the love of God, for the love of Jesus. This Jesus who is never satisfied! How many have died, how many have been tortured!

To understand the source of his deep pain, we must examine his earliest memories. After a long pause, he begins to speak, addressing an unseen listener: He says:
-Stay calm. We'll resolve this. Don't worry; they'll pay! Don't cry, girl. Don't cry. They'll pay!
We ask him, -"Who are you talking to? He replies, -"My daughter. The neighbor girl offended her, and she's hurt.

"What offense is this so serious? What did they say to her that made her hurt?

He answers:
-It wasn't an offense. It was a terrible thing! My daughter and this girl both wanted to go to the temple, but they couldn't both go. The other girl was chosen, and my daughter is hurt. We swore. Tonight, her father is out... Oh! How awful!

He pauses, then continues,
-There was only one way: eliminate the other. We entered the house. We thought the father was out. He wasn't. And with a stone, we killed them both. No. We didn't kill them... How horrible! I have to say something..."

This is unbearable. The memory of this scene is overwhelming. I had forgotten it until now.

-Did you set the fire?

-Yes. We caused an accident, to say it was accidental. We stunned them. (Could it have been with the stones?). It burned everything!

-Where was that? What region is that?

-Crete. It's been a long time... a long time... The temple? I don't know. Juno, I think. Father and daughter died there.

-Were there other people?"

-No."

It is necessary, then, to bring him back to the present time, while preserving the memories he has just evoked, which, according to his confession, were forgotten, so that he can compare the episode in which he and his daughter destroyed the lives and property of a man and his daughter by fire, with that other one in Inquisitional Spain, where and when his own daughter was burned alive. Let us hear him:

-I see images superimposed, one quickly upon the other... as if it were a calendar, always me, always me... She was Christian, and she was a fortune teller again, but they didn't call her a fortuneteller. (3)

-But why was she burned? Because she was Christian?

-It's because she prophesied.
"So, she was called a witch... That's it.

-When was that?

-You know... In the cursed time when so many died for Christ. (4)

-In the Spanish Inquisition? (5)

-Yes. I was her father. I was a blacksmith. And she received customers at her home. She was very kind; she helped the sick, and I helped her.

-And you were reported?

-Yes.

He wasn't convicted; only she was. He was filled with hatred and anger.

-I closed my shop and left. I don't know. I just see myself walking down a dark... dark... corridor...

-Yes, my dear. The important thing here is this: did you understand why she burned to death in this lifetime? Was she innocent? Was she unjustly punished? Or did she herself seek the redemption of her spirit?

-She seems to have known. She said to me: 'My father, don't cry. I will free myself. I give my life for another I took.

He didn't see her again in the spiritual world. As for the companion who always welcomed him—his guide—he hadn't wanted to see him since the time he replied that his daughter's sacrifice was just because she was an angel. Now he thinks he was right and everything is understood.

-But it's so hard for us to see things. He speaks.
-Do we have to die so many times, suffer so much agony to see?

-No, my dear. It wasn't necessary, but unfortunately, that was the decision you made. That was the path you chose, the door you opened. Is everything clear now? Do you understand that Christ is not guilty? God cannot be responsible for our mistakes. We are the ones who must answer for them. Is that clear?

-Yes, but I still can't feel love for Christ.

-Okay, my dear. There will be time for that. We do not demand that love from you here. You must demand for yourself a better understanding of your motives.

-I feel like a drop of water lost in the middle of the ocean. I am just a drop of water... I am alone and lost.

-No. You have your daughter, and you have that spiritual companion who always welcomes you. You are not alone.

-Since the last time, I haven't wanted to know anything more about him.

-But he hasn't abandoned you. Now you will leave with our friends here present.

-I'm afraid. Where am I going? I don't want to! I want to forget everything.

-No, my dear. You can't forget these important things.

-I wish you would exchange my mind for another.

-I can't do that; no one can but you.

-I see unfinished paths before me, roads that lead nowhere...

-Yes, they will, as long as you choose correctly. You will be helped by your daughter and by this companion who loves you so much and wants to see you redeemed.

-He will say that once again I failed.

-Yes, but he'll also tell you to try again.

-When will this stop? It's like a snowball...

-The choice is yours, my son. It's entirely up to you. You can stop today.

-I'm sorry. I made a fool of myself...

-No. You bravely did what you thought was right. Now you know it was wrong. Let's start all over again, on new foundations, with new hopes. Right now, what you need is rest. So go with our companions. We'll talk again another time. Go in peace. Courage!

-Pray for me. Ask God to put a barrier in front of me so I don't continue. I'm afraid. Once we start to slide down the cliff, it's hard to stop. Unless

you find something to block the way. My God! Oh, my God! What a sad fate, mine...

From then on, after the impact of the reunion with himself, he faces the harsh reality of pain, the hand-to-hand task of spiritual reconstruction from the wreckage of many lives, the paths to travel, the agony to endure... Trying once again to open the right door.

NOTES:

1 — The Crusades

For 200 years, from 1096 to 1291, Christians and Muslims fought for possession of the so-called "Holy Land." This two-century-long campaign was called the Crusades because of the symbol of the Cross that Christians wore on their tunics.

In reality, the movement began quite innocently, around the year 700 AD, with pilgrimages made as a form of penance, without warlike intentions. The mere act of setting foot on sacred ground was considered a great merit for the pilgrim. Over time, increasingly larger groups of the faithful gathered and began to travel armed. In 1064, about 7,000 of them set out under the direction of the Archbishop of Mainz.

Little by little, subtle arguments were developed justifying a conquest, rather than a simple visit. Instead of simply defending what was right, as was customary, the gentlemen were induced, by ecclesiastical preaching, to attack what was considered wrong—namely, the possession of Jesus' tomb by "infidels."

The appeal sounded legitimate and even exciting to good men, but it attracted a much larger crowd of adventurers of all kinds, people who had nothing to lose and the expectation of much to gain.

The movement's great inspiration was Pope Urban II (Odo de Lagery), born in France in 1042, who governed the Church during the turbulent 11-year period from 1088 to 1099. Possessing tremendous verbal power, brilliant intelligence, and undeniable dynamism, Urban practically created the Crusades with his memorable sermon in Clermont, France, where he was in exile, while in Rome, an Antipope occupied the pontifical "throne."

From a military point of view, the First Crusade was a success: it achieved important territorial conquests and even founded a Latin kingdom in Jerusalem, which, **"malgré tout",** lasted more than 40 years, undermined by rivalries, dissensions, and excessive ambitions**.**

"Les vices du gouvernment" wrote a French chronicler cited by the British, **— avaeint eté plus puissants que les vertus des gouvernants".** (The vices of the government were stronger than the virtues of the rulers.)

Behind the scenes of the movement, powerful political and commercial interests were stirring that had nothing to do with the declared purpose of the Crusades: the "liberation of the place where Jesus had been buried." Even if that were the case, however, the killing could never be justified, especially to dispute that specific piece of land.

As the Britannica states, after the capture of Jerusalem on July 15, 1099, in a "terrible massacre," the crusaders, "sobbing, choked with joy," went to the Church of the Sepulcher and "joined their bloody hands in prayer."

This was the Crusade in which the spiritual companion who told us about his life participated. As he reported, the Crusaders were consecrated, and all their paraphernalia, weapons, and animals were duly blessed. It was an honor and a glory to "fight for Christ," said those who claimed to be Jesus' representatives. Heaven was guaranteed for them.

Emmanuel, who does not hesitate to be stern, when necessary, draws attention to the historical setback triggered by the Crusades. As the Britannica also points out, instead of the planned occupation of the East by Westerners, the net result of the Crusades was the conquest of much of Europe by Muhammad's Arabs, who opted for a counterattack.

Instead of expanding territorially, as their leaders' ambitions had been, the so-called Christian world watched, perplexed and frightened, as its domains gradually shrank. By the end of the movement, the Ottoman Turks were entrenched on the banks of the Danube.

2. — Inquisition

By strange coincidence, the extensive article on the Inquisition in the

Encyclopedia Britannica is next to the article on Insanity (mental): "Inquisition, "Insanity." Situated today in a less distorted historical perspective, the Inquisition truly presents itself as a terrible collective insanity, which for centuries ravaged the Christian world, especially Europe and, within Europe, with unquestionable emphasis on Spain. Inquisition, from the Latin i***nquisitio*** (inquiry, investigation, research), was the name given to the ecclesiastical structures and system of identification and punishment, not only of declared heretics, but all those guilty of offending the tenets of Catholic orthodoxy.

The Britannica states that it is erroneous to consider that it happened in the 13th century, for the persecution of individuals who deviated from the strict path established by ecclesiastical authorities had been ongoing since the fourth century.

Over the centuries, however, around the basic idea of preserving the purity of the Christian faith, a terrible doctrine of legal entanglements crystallized, leaving the victim no chance of escape.

"There has never been a single case of pure and simple acquittal," writes emphatically the great authority on this dark historical period, the English writer H.C. Lea.

Aside from the Manichaeans, few sects were rigorously persecuted between the sixth and ninth centuries, but from the late tenth century to the early twelfth century, many heretics were executed at the stake or on the gallows in France, Italy, the Empire, and England.

However, theologians' opinions still differed regarding the extent and severity of the punishment. Saint Bernard, for example, despite his rigor in combating doctrinal deviations, never accepted the death penalty, preferring to recommend peaceful refutation, excommunication, and, eventually, imprisonment of the heretic.

At this time, however, the fierce persecution of the Cathars began in southern France. The Inquisition, as an institution dedicated to defending faith, quickly acquired uncontested power to decide the life and death of whomever its representatives saw fit.

The accused, often a mere suspect or not even that, was presumed guilty from the outset unless proven otherwise, and, as we saw in Lea, no one

could do so, especially since the judge himself served as accuser. No witness could refuse to testify under penalty of being suspected of heresy.

One of the Popes, Innocent the Third, gave notable impulse to the Inquisition; another Innocent, the Fourth, finally authorized the dark procedures of torture to obtain "confessions" that, by a cynical and horrific artifice, would later have to be "confirmed" in the presence of witnesses in supposedly "free" testimony. The right to defense, when not summarily denied, was as if it were, because the "lawyer" could only converse with his "client" in the presence of faithful servants of the Holy Office.

By the 13th century, another powerful incentive for inquisitorial practices was added by permitting the confiscation of the property of the condemned. Church and state shared in this veritable plunder, as did, of course, the inquisitors themselves, many of whom enriched themselves by plundering entire families into the most abject material, physical, and moral misery.

The enterprise became so lucrative and such a formidable instrument of power that the high command posts of this oppressive machine were contested through pressure, bribery, threats, intrigues, and crimes of all kinds. The inquisitors were accountable only to the Pope. Given the distances and communication difficulties of the time, very few could appeal to the supreme authority, especially since the Grand Inquisitors were personally chosen by the Pope.

3 - Inquisition in Spain

It was in Spain that this sinister instrument of oppression found its most widespread development. Its period of greatest strength and prestige, however, occurred during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, the Catholic Monarchs, who, in 1480, created a typically Spanish, nationalist Inquisition, practically independent of Rome. A predictable backlash ensued, but subsequent pontiffs eventually gave in and accepted the situation: Sixtus IV, Alexander VI, and Julius II, for example.

At this point, even Vatican decisions on books considered heretical would only be valid in Spain if countersigned by the Spanish "Holy Office." Financial disputes also arose between the Spanish Inquisition and the Papacy. The disagreement began because the Spanish did not want to recognize the validity of the documents Rome sold, as a sort of safe conduct that

guaranteed the lives and property of potential suspects, Jews and Muslims, for example.

However, a solution to the "impasse" was found: the Spanish Inquisition also began selling its "certificates." The problem is that neither document provided the desired protection for many people from the Inquisition's henchmen.

This nefarious task, based on the cynical premise of defending the Christian faith, just as the Crusades had been created to defend the tomb of Jesus, fell largely to Dominican and Franciscan monks.

That the spiritual descendants of Francis, whom Füllop-Müller rightly called "the Saint of Love," should have taken on such a horrendous task is one of the great incongruities in the history of religious thought, and it would be ironic if it weren't so tragic.

The Inquisition somehow survived until the nineteenth century, although emptied of its decision-making power over human lives, it retained much of its influence, as on October 9, 1861, the flames of the bonfire consumed, among others, Allan Kardec's **"The Spirits' Book"** in Barcelona, in a legitimate act of faith.

The Inquisition is, therefore, one of the darkest crossroads in history. It is one of the magnetic axes of horror, around which multitudes of tormented and tormenting spirits circulated, generating distressing karma that, to this day (and for a long time to come), continues to explode in the mediumistic work of spiritual rescue.

4 – The Wheel

This was the name given to a form of torture in which the accused was tied to a wagon wheel operated by cranks and had their bones broken with iron bars. Another type of wheel consisted of a structure designed to expand, attached to the wheel itself.

The victim was tied by the wrists and feet to the structure, and with the movement of the wheel, the body was stretched to its limits, causing unbearable pain.

There were countless other forms of torture: red-hot iron, nails under the fingernails and toenails, suspension by the fingers, drinking enormous amounts of water, and whatever else suggested the fertile imagination of beings driven to utter insanity. Meanwhile, scribes took notes of the "confessions" of these helpless sufferers.

5 — Crete

Crete is an island in southern Greece, measuring approximately 250 kilometers in length and ranging from 12 to 57 kilometers in width, situated in the Mediterranean Sea. While large and important, Crete's role in Greek history was unique, not aligning with typical expectations of its time. Archaeological findings reveal a rich artistic and cultural heritage, including evidence of contact with Egyptian civilization as early as 4,000 BC.

According to the Britannica the ship carrying Paul of Tarsus to Rome took refuge in the bay of Kaloi Limenes after his long stay in Caesarea, under guard. Emmanuel, in "Paul and Stephen," recounts that "they managed to touch upon some points in Crete," but leaves the impression that the ship did not take shelter in Kaloi Limenes, despite Paul's suggestion, because the captain did not accept the Apostle's proposal.

Transitioning to a different perspective, Will Durant, in his "The Life of Greece," refers to Crete as the site of a "lost civilization" because its origins are quite mysterious. He recalls that Homer, composing his verses around the ninth century BC, speaks of a Golden Age, when men were more civilized and life more refined.

6 — Pythonesses

Pythonesses, women gifted with mediumistic abilities, played a prestigious and important role in the temples of the time, serving as mediators between the consultees and the "gods."

They were carefully selected to perform these coveted and sought-after tasks. Famous oracles existed at Delphi, dedicated to Apollo, and at Dodona, to Zeus. At Delphi, the medium sat on a tripod stool over a cleft in the rock, from which gases escaped, inducing a trance.

The faithful believed that the gas resulted from the decomposition of the Python (hence the name Pythoness), which Apollo had killed at that spot and which was rotting forever underground.

2

THE "TWENTY-THREE"

Theoretically and structurally, the organization we had been working with for several weeks was a "convent," or at least that's what it called itself. In practice, it was one of the most extravagant among many institutions we had encountered over the years of mediumistic work.

It was led by a former priest and magician endowed with knowledge and abilities that gave him unquestionable power over a large number of incarnate and discarnate beings.

As always happens in such cases, once we managed to get him to rethink his philosophy of life, he abandoned his work, and the organization quickly fell apart.

However, there is always a small group determined to rebuild the leadership to continue its work. After all, they are manipulating important people and events, wielding considerable amounts of power and, what is of utmost importance to them, delaying the encounter with their own inner reality and the consequent atonement for their crimes.

A poor fellow appeared in our group that night, demented, or more precisely, in a painful process of mental alienation. It was difficult for him even to express himself at first.

He began by saying that the situation "there" was different from what it used to be. They were suddenly left without "overseers" and, therefore, without work.

In fact, his difficulty speaking was understandable—there was rarely anyone to talk to, for he lived (if that's the term) "down there," veritable infested caves, where he made amulets that the "Master" distributed to certain people, according to criteria that only he, the Master, could explain.

Our poor, alienated artisan, however, vaguely knew that such pieces served to "protect" people from the "Watchers," which, as we know, is the name they use to indicate the spiritual servants of good who are always roaming the umbral zones for rescue purposes.

Our companion explained to us that those who worked on the production of those amulets could not and should not talk much, because, according to the Master, they would be wasting energy necessary for the task.

It was, therefore, a somewhat isolated activity, during which, in fact, they remained connected to a thread, so that the energies would remain concentrated.

Did he like the work? "What does liking mean?" he asked, turning the question back to the instructor. "Here we don't like anything." "We do. You don't even know what liking or disliking is."

Before that, he had done two types of work: tanning leather and metalworking. He vaguely remembered living in a place called Serbia.(1)

Was it a long time ago?
-Well... I think it was before... I don't know what time is... I have no history: I live here, I work here, I am here. I fulfill my obligations.

Patiently, the indoctrinator guides the narrative, searching for an identity for him, trying to situate him in time as a living, thinking human being, endowed with reason and memory. Little by little, his little personal story, back in Serbia, begins to unfold.

He had no home. He repaired things, made things, always working with leather and metal. There was a time when he owned a cart and wandered from village to village, making a precarious living from his humble work. He does not remember having a wife or children. Oh, yes, he had a dog. That is all he knew about himself.

-When we join the Order, he explained, the Master makes us forget. If we keep too much going on in our heads, it hinders our service.

It is clear he is not aware of his spiritual condition, much less that he is disembodied. Telling him everything abruptly would be disastrous and, moreover, merciless. The indoctrinator tells him that he is a human being, that he has had many lives... but he interrupts to say:

-No. The Master didn't say that. The Master is very good.

-But you don't have that fleshly body anymore, do you?

-I have a body, yes, sir, the same body.

-And the dog? And the cart?

-I don't know about that. I don't know anything about that.

The indoctrinator does not insist. He is just probing him to tell him that he is a human being and that he can leave, but the conversation returns to the topic of amulets.

He also makes some crosses, rings, and wheels, which have "something written inside," but the Master says they do not need to know what all that means: words, symbols, figures, signs, representations of stars, crescents, etc.

He only knows that everything must be done very carefully, without changing anything. Once, he got careless and caused a huge mess. One of those symbols came out wrong, and the Master told him he needed to pay more attention, because otherwise, instead of doing good, he would do harm.

-And do you have friends there?

-What's a friend?

-Someone you like.

-The Master says he's a friend to all of us.

Right now, he's in total perplexity, waiting for the Master and for new orders.

-And by the way, I wanted to tell you that "Brother Iglésias" was sending a message to the indoctrinator.

He thought the message was a bit strange, but he had to deliver it.

-It's for you, sir; for an authority. You are an authority. 'Tell the Big Boss there, so he can forget it, I'm not going there.' He said you've been sending him messages... Because now the brother who used to do that is no longer

there... I don't know what it is... And every day, more messages arrive. It's pouring in messages there.

Indeed, the institution had a sort of control post that policed and censored all communication with community members. The companion who performed this important task had already been drawn into our group. Now that the "convent" was falling apart, a triumvirate of dissatisfied workers had decided to take over.

The difficulty at the moment, according to our informant, was that they were unable to "close the doors." As for him, he would only leave upon express and direct order from the Master. Otherwise, “there would be no Christian who could get him out." His name?
-I was there... My name was 23. Why? Because it's easier for those who work in the "chambers."

He explained that everyone had a sign ("See?"), and when they were absent for any reason, they left the sign hanging on a board so everyone knew who was away.

-But that's a number, said the indoctrinator. What's your name?

-I don't know." It's a mess... It's as if there is" nothing in my head.

Did he believe in God? Yes, he did, but in this whole thing about spirit and immortality, he seemed completely lost.
-Death? I don't know. Do we die? I've never died!

-But you're not living in Serbia anymore.

-No. The Master took me from there. He said this specialty of mine was very important. You'd put a piece of iron in my hand and I'd do anything. I'd even make images!

He usually walked here and there with his cart and dog, looking for customers, but only during the bad times, because when it was good, the customers came looking for him.

-When it was time for lovers to go out... Spring...

-And did you have a girlfriend?

A long pause. He seems to search his nonexistent memory for even a trace of such experiences. He finds nothing.

-I don't know... I don't know anything...

-And if the Master comes now and says: '23, you don't have to do this anymore.' What would you do?

-Then he has to tell me what to do. Whatever he says, I do. That's all I know how to do.

And he adds with just pride that he once made a very beautiful altar for the "sanctuary" there in the convent...

He remembers again "Brother Iglésias," who informed him that the Master is traveling, but that he should be back soon. The truth is, no one there knows what to do without the Master.

Suddenly, he seems to make a greater effort:
-I just wanted to know... to know things... My head! I know I used to have... Sometimes... I know I used to have a head, but now I have nothing.

He believes in God, yes. And he says right away why:
-God punishes!

As for praying, they do pray; they go to Mass, repeat everything correctly, because they have loudspeakers there. What kind of prayers?
-I believe in God the Father, for example. Our Father, no. Hail Holy Queen, yes.
-So you believe in Our Lady?

And he, a little startled:
-We don't say that name much there... I don't know why." There are some names there they don't like us to mention. This name is one of them. They say it has bad vibes. It's dangerous to mention that name.

-What bad vibes can a person who was the mother of Christ have?

-Yes, but there's a little truth there. (Pause) I think I'll tell you. May I tell you?

After a quick assessment, he seems to trust the indoctrinator and tells his illustrative little story to demonstrate the "danger" posed by simply invoking Our Lady's name. Yes, there was a fellow there who had to do a thirteenth.

-Do you know what a thirteenth is? He asks the indoctrinator.

As he explains, it was a sophisticated form of punishment. First, however, he had to go through the "House of Adjustments," where he was severely tortured and left in a terrible state due to the lashes. After all, he had disobeyed an important order. It turns out that the thirteenth went "all wrong":

-He cried so much! Then he did something forbidden there: speak that name you mentioned. We're not supposed to speak that name there, you know? And he said, "Oh, my..." and said the name. "Help me, my..." and said the name. And he beat his chest and cried, on his knees. What happened to him, I don't know.

There was something there, almost at the end of the thirteenth, and he prayed so much to... that name... that he might be saved in the name of Jesus Christ (we can say Jesus Christ). And there was a flash, suddenly, a strange flash that blinded everyone. And when that flash faded, he "was gone." Then the Master said, "See? The ground opened up, and the fires of hell carried him away. It was the punishment for speaking that name that he shouldn't have spoken."

-And you believed that?

-I know he disappeared...

His concern now returned to the Master. Where was he? No one knew him. He had never been away for so long, although he sometimes visited the other "Convents"...

***

At this point, we interrupted our conversation to pray. Next, we began magnetic induction, aiming for memory regression. We had there, as it turned out, a fully conditioned spirit, programmed to perform specific tasks, roboticized to the limits of what was possible, remaining with only a minimal use of memory. The rest was completely obliterated, inhibited,

and placed beyond the reach of the sensors of consciousness. From this, one can evaluate the resources and techniques of the one they called the Master...

Before continuing, an inevitable question: how can a person reach such a level of affliction, and why?

His first word, already back in time, is a proper name that we cannot promise is spelled correctly.

-Moish... Moish is my name. Moish Ibn Vraleski. Get that horse out of here. Get it out, I won't need it now. Where am I? Well... I'm here! I live here. I'm going out. I'm going to the city with the "troika. It's close... about two days...

-And what are you going to do there?

-I'm going to... I don't know... I'm going to trade, exchange. Take things and bring things back.

-Do you live alone there?

-I live alone. I have neighbors, but they all live far away. It's a hut. I have a horse and dogs. I need the sled.

-What do you do? Objects? Yes, and now you're going to the city to trade...

-Yeah... I arrived in the city and went to see my daughter...

He seems to reveal this very reluctantly.

-Ah, you have a daughter!

-I have a daughter in town.

-Is she married?

-No, she's young. She was born very late. Her mother died.

-And are you very old already?

-I am old.

-Yes, but tell me about your daughter. Did you meet her?

-She was very happy. I exchange things in the city and give everything to her. She is young and beautiful, yes. But she... she... Oh! I don't want to... talk.

-It doesn't matter. If you don't want to, you don't have to. The important thing is that you know what happened. We're not here to be curious about your personal problems. We're just trying to help you. And you're here among friends who want to help you. Don't say anything you think you shouldn't say.

-Where am I, after all? Who am I, after all? Who am I?

What strange place is this?
He seems to have awakened from a long, deep sleep in a strange place, and even with a memory foreign to his own.

The indoctrinator tries to guide him:
-But what about your daughter?

-My daughter is dead. She killed herself...

-Do you know why?

-I know. She killed herself... I have nothing left.

-Are you going back to your hut?

-Not without first avenging her. So young! So beautiful! A rose... She killed herself... I avenged her... It's all so confusing in my head!

-Yes, but you know who you are.

-Moish. The mark...! The terrible mark!

-Are you Jewish?

-They don’t like us.

-My dear brother. There's no such problem between us. Don't worry about it. We understand.

-But that's why she killed herself. She killed herself for a nobleman because of her origins, her caste. We changed the name, but it's of no use. It's not the name, it's the blood.

-We would like to tell you that above the name, the blood, all these afflictions, we are spirits, we are immortal souls.

-Yes, but even knowing that, my pain was overwhelming. Losing her still devastated me.

-That's true. But did you lose her? She also continues to exist. Her body disappeared, but the spirit did not. Don't you think so? Don't you believe it? Your religion teaches that too.

-My grief turned to anger as I grew old. I avenged her loss—I searched for him and set fire to his house.

-Yes, my dear, but that didn't bring your daughter back to you, did it?

-And I returned... And I had nothing left to live for. And I hadn't even fulfilled the promise I made to her mother at the hour of her death: to protect and support her. I was so wretched that I returned to my cabin, released the animals, set fire to the house, and killed myself too. But I stayed there, burning in the middle of that hell, I don't know how long.

-But then you were taken away and saw that you hadn't died, that your spirit is still alive. Isn't that true?

-Me... The Torah! The Torah! It didn't help me at all!

-No, my dear. Some knowledge remained, and one day you will understand. I hope it will be soon... We don't have just one life. We live many lives...

-But why are men so wicked? I sent her to the city to educate her, so that she would become a refined young lady, so that any suitor would be proud of her. I never understood that. Why can't men understand each

other? Will we have to be eternally a cursed race? Cursed and outlawed? Homeless... nameless...

-You didn't pay attention to what I said before. We have many lives, not just one.

But he continues:

-We are not a people; we are a caste. Ah! You don't know what that is. We are not a race; we are a caste.

-But there are also the Hebrews who excelled in the arts, in the sciences...

-No one accepts us as a race. We are a cursed caste.

-Listen, Moish. We don't share those ideas. On the contrary, we believe that we are all children of God, and we accept and receive you as a brother, as a friend, whatever your caste, your race, your condition, your belief or disbelief. We are all brothers, all children of the same Father.

-Cursed race! What are you doing to me? What are you doing to me? What is this? These images... This is my property.

He pauses. And from what follows, we understand that he has just plunged into the memories of another existence.

-I am a great lord. They want to put a court of justice in front of me, to judge an act that I committed... of humanity. In defense of society!

-What was that act? What did it consist of?

-Who are those silent young men there, all dressed in white?

The Spirit contemplates superior spiritual companions present there, to help him with their presence and support.

-But what did you do?

-What did I do? Well... What every zealous man does. I am a nobleman of a traditional family. And this young man appeared in my service.

He came in a batch of slaves on the last galley that arrived, from the nobleman Pamplonius.

-And you bought this slave?

-I bought a whole batch. They came from there...

-From Palestine?

-Yes. You would have done the same. Are you a nobleman?

-I am not. I am a commoner.

-Then you wouldn't have done it. I ordered all the men castrated so that they wouldn't procreate. Is that a horror?

-I don't know, my dear. That's for your conscience to say, not me. We're not here to accuse you.

-Especially that young man who had the audacity to raise his eyes to one of my daughters. And she dared to lower hers to him. So, I took action.

-And they were Jewish, then? They are Jewish...

-They are. Look, it's a favor, you know, to accept them.

-What's your name? What's your name?

-Why?

He asks, from the height of his pride.

-To get to know you better. To call you by your name. We all have a right to our name.

-Oh! Stop it! I don't have to answer to anyone.

-Yes, but you have to answer to your conscience, don't you, brother?

-I don't need to obey orders. I don't receive orders.

-Yes, you give orders. There's no need for me to say anything more. We're going to ask you... Pay attention... that without losing the memory of this existence as a Roman nobleman, and remembering the other one you had in Serbia, as Moish, you awaken to the reality of your spirit. Come on, come!

In a few moments, he resumes a new posture. It is evident that he is perplexed and tries to situate himself in time and space. He inspects, surprised, the environment and the body of the medium through whom he manifests.

-What do you want to know? — asks the instructor. Don't you have your nameplate there? Are you remembering everything? Do you know now what happened to you?

-But, what is this? The Master won't like this!

-Brother. We'll deal with the Master later. The important thing is that you know who you are.

-And who am I?

— You are a spirit who erred and who is having the opportunity to remake yourself. In one life you sacrificed human beings, your brothers, our brothers, and received them with contempt because they were Jewish.

In another life, you were Jewish to feel in your own flesh, and unfortunately, through your own daughter, the sting of guilt, of pain. That is the lesson we wanted you to learn. We have all the respect, all the affection, all the love for your spirit, because we are all brothers in God. Do you understand?

-I have a confusion in my head! Which of these three people am I, after all?

-You are all of them.

-I can't be three!

-But you can have three lives, can't you?

-The Master says that's the work of the devil!

-Do you think so?

-I can't be three. How can I be three?

-I want to know the following: What do you think?

-Maybe you invented this? The Master invents so many things!

-Then he lies. Did you lie too?

-No. He doesn't invent; he doesn't lie. I'm not talking about him.

-We respect him, my dear. We know who he is.

-But who am I, after all, of these three? Where am I? Where are the others? Where are the other two selves?

-They are within yourself. The guilt lies there. Didn't you understand that we have many lives? I told you this from the beginning. And you will have other lives. It's not just one.

-But how will I know that this is true?

-My dear, it was you who said it, not me. If it's a lie, it's yours.

-But the Torah didn't say that. Nothing like that.

-What is not in the Torah cannot exist? My dear brother: We don't want to force you into any decision here with us.

-Well, now you've confused me completely. How am I going to deal with these three people?

-It's not three people, it's three lives. You have many more than three lives. It's not just three. There are others still. If you look, you will remember. We are born, we live, we die, and then we are born again in other lives. The spirit is immortal.

-I want to leave, please.

-You will go, but remember this: the spirit is immortal, and responsible for

its actions. Everything we do wrong we pay for later.

-But we pay there. The Master said that.

-Didn't you see now how one pays?

-But I lost an innocent daughter. That's true. An innocent daughter.

-Yes, my dear. And when you sacrificed those other brothers? Why did you act that way?

-Xoxana (?) Beautiful!

He seems lost in memories for a few moments. The instructor resumes.

-You have assumed responsibilities before God's law.

He, however, is fixated on the beautiful image of his daughter. The instructor recommends that he meditate on all of this while he rests. And if necessary, they would talk again at another time.

-If all this is true, how come I am here alone, without anyone?

-You abandoned all your loved ones. You have been running away for a long time. You hid in that world over there to escape and rid yourself of afflictions. You always understood that you needed revenge. Life is a permanent lesson of God's love for us. We have to reciprocate. We do not suffer unjustly. All our pains result from mistakes we have made.

-But all of this is so far away...!

-Distance doesn't matter, my brother...

-Why am I here alone? Where is my wife?

-Those beings you loved are still alive, as you are alive. You can find them...

-This is too much for my head. Too much!

-Let's take it slow. You don't have to believe this; to accept this here, now,

with us. You'll have time to think. What I wanted to show you, my dear companion, is that you are not a 23... You are a human being; you have memories, recollections, and pain. You also have love, hopes... Do you understand?

Long pause. And then:
-This is too much for my head...

The instructor proposes a provisional, temporary solution: to put him to sleep for a restorative rest. When he awoke, more refreshed, he would return to think about everything to draw his own conclusions.

-Is that alright? Thank you very much for helping us to move forward with this proposal...

-Where is my Xoxana?

He is then put to sleep and taken away by the spiritual mentors of the group.

NOTES:

1 — Serbia

An ancient kingdom in the interior of southeastern Europe north of the Balkan Peninsula, now incorporated into Yugoslavia(*). The Serbs are a people of Slavic origin, but speaking Croatian.

While the Croats are (or were) predominantly Catholic and use the Latin alphabet, the Serbs prefer the Orthodox Church and the Cyrillic alphabet used in Russia, with some special signs to represent specific sounds of their language. Their origin is somewhat obscure. The first references to the Serbs emerge in the 9th century. Before that, it was only known that they lived off agriculture in Galicia and that in the 16th century they descended to the shores of the Black Sea and from there they later moved northwest, following the course of the Danube River, which they crossed to occupy an area in the northwest, in the Balkan Peninsula.

(*) Digital note: updating the author's information: “The union that Serbia is trying to achieve today (2017) is a legacy drawn on the map of old Europe: Yugoslavia was a single country made up of six republics, which today are independent: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia”.

2 — Troika

In Russia and Hungary, this name refers to a sled (or carriage) pulled by three horses, the one in the center at a trot and the other two at a gallop. According to what our spiritual companion in this story says, however, the use of the troika is more widespread than the works consulted for the preparation of this note suggest, since it was also found in Serbia (a people, incidentally, of Slavic origin, as we have seen) and probably in other surrounding regions. It is also assumed that other animals were used, and not just horses.